



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Maryland's Social Services Agency



MEDIA RELEASE

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MARYLAND'S EASTERN SHORE COUNTIES CELEBRATE SOCIAL WORK MONTH BY NAMING SOCIAL WORKERS OF THE YEAR

*Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester Counties
Applaud Child Welfare and Adult Services Workers*

BALTIMORE – March is National Social Work Appreciation Month and local departments of social services in each jurisdiction are honoring workers who represent the best in the profession. They are:

Anne McCauley, Caroline County Department of Social Services (DSS) Continuing Protective Services worker

Lorraine Palmer, Dorchester County DSS Project Home Care Case manager

Marti Lively, Kent County DSS Adult Services worker

Cynthia Olah, Queen Anne's County DSS Child Protective Services worker;

Karen Good, Somerset County DSS Family Services worker

Lee Newcomb, Talbot County DSS Family Preservation worker;

Jami Truitt, Wicomico County DSS Team Decision/Family Involvement coordinator

Denise Burton, Worcester County DSS Foster Care worker.

Social workers and caseworkers perform a wide range of essential tasks including determining the safety of children, identifying new foster parents, helping facilitate adoption services and ensuring the well being of elderly residents who live independently. They touch the lives of thousands of vulnerable children and adults in Maryland and across the country.

“Our social workers are dedicated professionals that strive daily to make a positive difference in the lives of others,” said Department of Human Resources Secretary Brenda Donald. “Now, more than ever, they are the vital link between Maryland’s most vulnerable population and an array of support services that this population needs.” Last year, over 600,000 Marylanders received one or more of the services provided by the Department of Human Resources and its 24 local Departments of Social Services across the state.

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Each of the counties on the eastern shore, (Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester) have selected a worker of the year that best represents the "*purpose and possibilities*" in social work – this year's national social work appreciation month theme. Supervisors, co-workers and peers selected from workers that exhibit the best qualities of the profession.

Anne McCauley works hard on behalf of Caroline County families in her role as both Continuing Protective Services Worker and Inter-Agency Family Preservation Social Worker. She is known among her colleagues for working late evenings, on weekends and often putting aside her personal schedule to ensure that the needs of the families and children she serves are met. Anne's work has been recognized as superior by community partners, her peers and families.

Dorchester County DSS's **Lorraine Palmer** is a case manager for Project Home Care and provides services to individuals with HIV/AIDS. Her co-workers and peers say, "Lorraine is very hard working and dedicated. She always provides excellent service and support to keep her clients safe in their communities. She is a very strong advocate for her clients on a daily basis."

Over the last three years, **Marti Lively** of Kent County DSS has assumed additional duties, including acting as lead worker for Adult Services, Adult Protective Services Investigator, case manager for Guardianship cases and assisting with management of the In-Home Aides. Marti is self-motivated and a reliable team member, assisting her co-workers without hesitation. She strives to produce a quality work product and more often than not, works with her clients beyond the regular workday.

Cynthia Olah has been an employee with the Queen Anne's County Department of Social Services since 2006. Prior to this, she served for eleven years as a Child Protective Services social worker in both Talbot and Caroline Counties. She knows the importance of the involving the family in decision making and has become a trained facilitator for Family Involvement Meetings. She embraced the new state model, volunteering to help coordinate the meetings for the agency's facilitators to help enhance implementation of this best practice.

Somerset County DSS's **Karen Good** is a dedicated social worker, with over 30 years of service. She is always willing to work outside the normal work day to meet the needs of her clients. She is highly creative and innovative in finding solutions to problems. She is an outstanding advocate and always seems to be able to identify extra resources to help others. Karen is an excellent example of what can be accomplished when you work for the good of the team.

Lee Newcomb shows dedication to the Talbot County DSS families she is serving. She works hard to engage them in their service plan, advocates with community providers to meet their needs and pushes hard to get them on track. She does not give up on her families even when they look like they are giving up on themselves. Added to her already demanding job duties, Lee sits on numerous committees representing the department.

Jami Truitt is the Team Decision Making/Family Involvement Meetings (TDM/FIM) coordinator for the Wicomico County DSS. She has done an outstanding job in implementing TDM/FIM which has resulted in a decrease in the number of children coming into care and safely remaining with their families. She is constantly pursuing creative ways to enhance our services and improve service delivery.

Denise Burton is a warm and friendly individual who is deeply devoted to her work and "her families." Her commitment and people skills are her strengths. She has an amazing way with the most difficult clients and often uses humor, or at times confrontation, to achieve positive outcomes for Worcester County families. She is involved in volunteer work with the Disaster Mental Health Services through the American Red Cross, has taught reading to illiterate adults and, more recently, has begun learning sign language.

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- Martin O'Malley, Governor
- Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor
- Brenda Donald, Secretary

Each of the honorees has been invited to attend an appreciation luncheon to be held on Monday, March 30, 2009. Lt. Governor Anthony Brown will bring remarks at the event.

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The Maryland Department of Human Resources is the state's social service provider. The agency collaborates with 24 local jurisdictions to: provide foster care, adoption and protective services to children; collect and distribute child support payments; and provide temporary cash, food stamps and medical assistance to families. It also administers programs for homeless persons, refugees, migrant workers, victims of crime and women who are displaced, battered or assaulted. Last year, DHR served 638,000 people in need. In terms of its annual budget, DHR is Maryland's fourth largest state agency.